

United States Marshals Service



FACT SHEET United States Marshals Service

The Marshals Service is the nation's oldest and most versatile federal law enforcement agency. Federal marshals have served the country since 1789, often times in unseen but critical ways. To this day, the Marshals Service occupies a uniquely central position in the federal justice system. It is the enforcement arm of the federal courts, and as such, it is involved in virtually every federal law enforcement initiative.

Presidentially appointed U.S. marshals direct the activities of 94 Marshals Service district offices — one for each federal judicial district. Approximately 3,350 deputy marshals form the backbone of the agency. Among their many duties, they arrest more than half of all federal fugitives, protect the federal judiciary, operate the Witness Security Program, transport federal prisoners and seize property acquired by criminals through illegal activities.

The agency's headquarters is in Arlington, Va., just across the Potomac River from Washington, D.C.

Judicial Security

Protecting federal judicial officials — which includes judges, attorneys and jurors — is a high priority for the Marshals Service. Deputy marshals use the latest security techniques and devices during highly sensitive trials throughout the nation. Experienced, former law enforcement officers, having served in various capacities and specialties throughout their careers, comprise the agency's Court Security Officer

(CSO) Program. These contracted CSOs receive limited deputations as special deputy marshals and play a vital role in courthouse security. Using security screening systems, CSOs detect and intercept weapons and other prohibited items that individuals attempt to bring into federal courthouses. Senior inspectors, deputy marshals and CSOs provide security at more than 400 facilities that house court operations. The Marshals Service also oversees each aspect of courthouse construction projects — from design through completion — to ensure the safety of federal judges, court personnel and the public.

Fugitive Investigations

The Marshals Service is the federal government's primary agency for conducting fugitive investigations. The Marshals Service arrests more federal fugitives than all other law enforcement agencies combined. In fiscal 2004, the Marshals Service arrested more than 36,000 federal fugitives, clearing 39,000 felony warrants. Working with authorities at federal, state and local levels, Marshals Service-led task forces arrested 31,600 state and local fugitives, clearing 37,900 state and local felony warrants. The Marshals Service currently leads 83 local fugitive task forces and five regional fugitive task forces dedicated to locating and arresting wanted criminals. The Marshals Service has developed close working relationships with other law enforcement agencies on fugitive matters, and it has a history of providing assistance, expertise and training to agencies on the federal, state, local and international levels.

Fugitive Investigations (cont.)

The Marshals Service is the primary agency to apprehend foreign fugitives believed to be in the United States, and it is the agency responsible for locating and extraditing American fugitives in foreign countries. In fiscal 2004, the Marshals Service coordinated 541 extraditions from 56 different countries. In support of its international fugitive investigative mission, the Marshals Service has established foreign field offices in Jamaica, Mexico and the Dominican Republic. It has also established a successful law enforcement liaison program along the borders of Mexico and Canada. In addition, the Marshals Service has formed a mutually beneficial relationship with the Department of State's Diplomatic Security Service, and Marshals Service employees hold key positions at Interpol.

Special Missions and Programs

The Marshals Service carries out hundreds of special missions each year that are related to its broad law enforcement and judicial security responsibilities. It can also respond to homeland security crises and national emergencies. The agency's Special Operations Group (SOG) is a specially trained tactical unit comprised of deputy marshals who can respond to incidents anywhere in the United States or its territories. Members remain on call 24 hours a day for SOG missions.

Witness Security Program

The Marshals Service ensures the safety of witnesses who risk their lives testifying for the government in cases involving organized crime and other significant criminal activity. Since 1971, the Marshals Service has protected, relocated and given new identities to 7,700 witnesses and more than 9,800 of their family members. The testimonies of protected witnesses have resulted in an 89 percent conviction rate since the program began. The successful operation of the Witness Security Program has been generally recognized as providing a unique and valuable tool in the government's battle against major criminal enterprises and international terrorism. Witness Security Program personnel are the world's leading

authority and foremost experts and consultants on witness security matters, providing guidance and training to numerous government officials throughout the world — including officials in Eastern Europe and South America.

JPATS

In 1995, the air fleets of the Marshals Service and the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement merged to create the Justice Prisoner and Alien Transportation System (JPATS). The merger created a more efficient and effective system for transporting prisoners and criminal aliens. Managed by the Marshals Service, JPATS is one of the largest transporters of prisoners in the world, handling more than a thousand requests every day to move prisoners between judicial districts, correctional institutions and foreign countries. On average, JPATS completes nearly 300,000 prisoner and alien movements a year via coordinated air and ground systems.

Prisoner Services

The Marshals Service currently houses approximately 53,000 federal, pre-sentenced prisoners each day. Approximately 77 percent of Marshals Service prisoners are housed in 1,300 state, local and private jails. The remaining 23 percent are housed in Federal Bureau of Prisons facilities. In areas where detention space is scarce, the Marshals Service uses Cooperative Agreement Program funds to improve local jail conditions and expand jail capacities in return for guaranteed space for its federal prisoners.

Asset Forfeiture Program

The Marshals Service is responsible for managing and disposing of seized and forfeited properties acquired by criminals through illegal activities. Under the auspices of the Department of Justice's Asset Forfeiture Program, the Marshals Service currently manages more than \$964 million worth of property, and it promptly disposes of assets forfeited by all Department of Justice agencies. The program's goal is to maximize the net return from forfeited property and then to reinvest the proceeds for law enforcement purposes.